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FILED
JANICE K. BREWER
SECRETARY OF STATE

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SENATE MEMORIAL 1006

A MEMORIAL

URGING THE BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT TO ACCOMMODATE RECREATIONAL SHOOTING IN
THE IRONWOOD FOREST NATIONAL MONUMENT.

(TEXT OF BILL BEGINS ON NEXT PAGE)

1 To the Secretary of the United States Department of the Interior and the
2 Director of the Bureau of Land Management:

3 Your memorialist respectfully represents:

4 Whereas, article II, section 26, Constitution of Arizona, recognizes
5 the right of citizens to bear arms by stating that "the right of the
6 individual citizen to bear arms in defense of himself for the State shall not
7 be impaired." Likewise, the Second Amendment to the United States
8 Constitution safeguards the "right of the people to keep and bear arms";
9 and

10 Whereas, in order for the citizens of this State to exercise a
11 meaningful constitutional right to arms guaranteed by their state and federal
12 constitutions, they must have readily available venues to practice and hone
13 their shooting skills, as they have since territorial days; and

14 Whereas, more than seventy per cent of all land in Arizona is now
15 managed by either the federal government or tribal nations, with seventeen
16 per cent directly controlled by the Bureau of Land Management (Bureau); and

17 Whereas, Bureau lands have traditionally been intended to accommodate
18 multiple uses, including recreational shooting, plinking, hunting, hiking,
19 biking, rock climbing, bird watching, off-road vehicle travel and camping,
20 without jeopardizing the public safety; and

21 Whereas, hunters, who are essential to maintaining the strength of the
22 State's economy and conservation efforts, currently use Bureau lands as areas
23 to safely and responsibly sight-in their firearms and engage in the practice
24 of their hunting skills, ensuring the safe and humane harvest of game
25 animals; and

26 Whereas, formal shooting ranges do not replicate the experience of
27 dispersed recreational shooting on public lands and are often too difficult
28 and costly for average Arizonans to travel to on a regular basis; and

29 Whereas, the vast majority of recreational shooters respect the natural
30 resources found on public lands and endeavor to leave public lands in the
31 same condition as when they arrived; and

32 Whereas, the Bureau is proposing closure of the 128,000-acre Ironwood
33 Forest National Monument northwest of Tucson to all recreational shooting as
34 part of its preferred Alternative "C" for its draft Resource Management Plan
35 because of safety concerns and damage to natural resources; and

36 Whereas, the Bureau signed a Memorandum of Understanding in 2006 with
37 more than three dozen conservation and sportsmen advocacy organizations that
38 guaranteed it would work cooperatively with these groups to jointly attempt
39 to address perceived concerns regarding resource damage and public safety in
40 a mutually satisfactory manner before proposing closure of Bureau lands to
41 recreational shooting; and

42 Whereas, none of the groups that were signatories to the Memorandum of
43 Understanding were informed of the announcement of the preferred Alternative
44 "C"; and

1 Whereas, concerns regarding resource damage and safety can be addressed
2 cooperatively between the Bureau and the nongovernmental signatories to the
3 Memorandum through efforts such as public education campaigns and enhanced
4 enforcement of existing laws and regulations; and

5 Whereas, the National Rifle Association of America volunteered its
6 expertise to the Bureau on a number of occasions to help address concerns
7 expressed by the Bureau as early as 2003, with no result; and

8 Whereas, the complete closure of all 128,000 acres of the Monument
9 based on safety concerns is unacceptable when there are many safe
10 recreational shooting locations in undeveloped areas that include three
11 distinct mountain ranges, as is the case of the Monument; and

12 Whereas, the public's confidence in the final Resource Management Plan
13 has been harmed by press accounts supported by the Bureau's Tucson field
14 office and published weeks before the close of the public input process.
15 Wherefore your memorialist, the Senate of the State of Arizona, prays:

16 1. That the Bureau revise the preferred Alternative "C" for the draft
17 Resource Management Plan to accommodate the time-honored recreational
18 shooting in the Monument that has been responsibly practiced by the majority
19 of users in the multiple use framework customarily recognized by the Bureau.

20 2. That the Bureau honor its commitment, as set out in the Memorandum
21 of Understanding, to work cooperatively with the conservation and sportsmen
22 advocacy organizations party to the Memorandum to find mutually satisfactory
23 solutions to issues associated with resource damage and public safety and
24 incorporate these solutions in the revised Alternative "C".

25 3. That the Bureau release the revised Alternative "C" for a new round
26 of public comment absent the bias displayed by the Bureau's Tucson field
27 office.

28 4. That the Bureau revise its current practices in Arizona to avoid
29 closing its other vast holdings throughout the state to recreational
30 shooting.

31 5. That, as part of its revised practices, the Bureau commit to
32 honoring the provisions of the signed Memorandum of Understanding.

33 6. That the Secretary of State of the State of Arizona transmit copies
34 of this Memorial to the Secretary of the United States Department of the
35 Interior, the Director of the Bureau of Land Management and the State
36 Director of the Arizona Office of the Bureau of Land Management.

~~UNANIMOUSLY ADOPTED BY THE SENATE JUNE 4, 2007.~~

~~FILED IN THE OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE JUNE 5, 2007.~~